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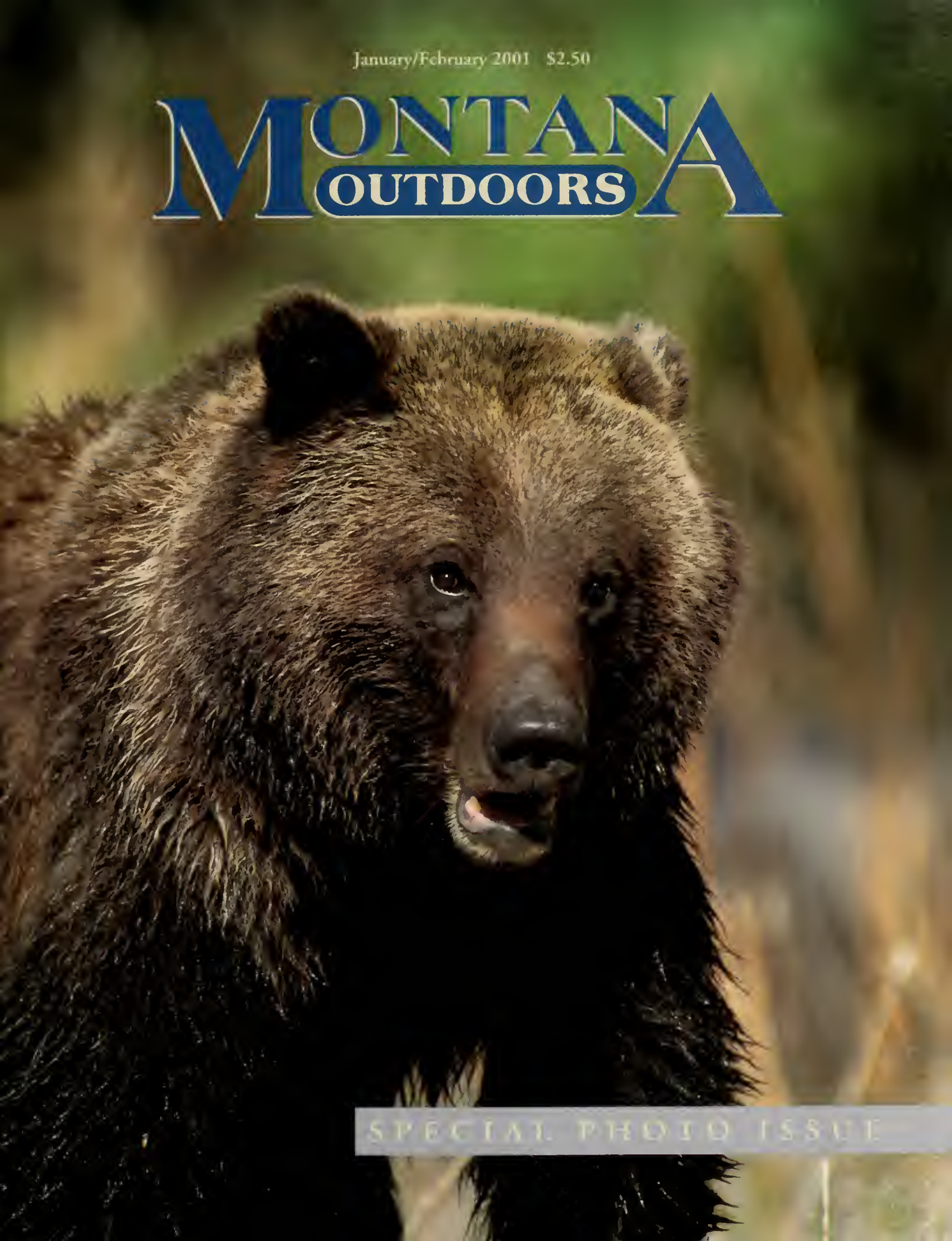
MONTANA OUTDOORS



SPECIAL PHOTO ISSUE

A CENTURY OF CONSERVATION
1901 2001

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

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FRONT COVER—Grizzly bear
by Pete & Alice Bengeyfield

BACK COVER—Young hunters
by DenverBryan.com

DUSA

DONALD M. JONES

MONTANA OUTDOORS
VOLUME 20, NUMBER 1

For the twentieth time in as many years, we are starting out the new year by featuring the work of some of Montana's finest outdoor photographers.

Each year, we debate the wisdom of devoting an entire issue—one sixth of our annual output—solely to photos of wildlife and Montana landscapes. Someone always raises the question, "Shouldn't we use *all* of our annual allotment of 240 pages to inform and educate our readers about FWP activities, wildlife issues, and outdoor opportunities?" Just as predictably, someone else counters with the old maxim about one picture being worth a thousand words.

So far, the "picture people" have carried the day, and if our mail is any indication, we've made the right choice. Our readers never seem to tire of photos depicting the grandeur of the mountains, the subtle beauty of the plains, or the majesty of an elk, pronghorn, or grizzly bear. It reinforces our belief that Montanans care deeply about our state's natural beauty, abundant wildlife, and recreational opportunities, as they have for the past 100 years.

It's worth remembering that a century ago, when the state legislature created the agency we now know as Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, wildlife populations had reached rock bottom. Over several generations, the Department, its citizen Commissioners, and Montanans from all walks of life worked shoulder to shoulder to restore and conserve our wild heritage.

The fruits of their labor are reflected in the pages of this, our 20th annual Special Photo Issue. Enjoy!—*Dave Books*

South of Livingston, spring moisture paints the Absaroka foothills in constrasting shades of green. Named for the Absaroka or Crow Indians, these mountains join the Beartooths to form the rugged Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness.

Montana's outdoor beauty comes in many colors, from a bull elk grazing among purple lupines to a Merriam's gobbler strutting in springtime finery.

DENVERBRYAN.COM

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A cow moose and her calf cool off among the cattails, while a red-necked grebe chick enjoys the view from its mother's back.

TOM J. ULRICH

KAREN NICHOLS

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On the opposite page, golden larches provide a splendid backdrop for a fall outing on McDonald Creek in Glacier National Park. At left, a yellow-bellied sapsucker relishes a beakful of ants. Below, the warning slap of a beaver's tail sends water flying.

GARY LEPPART

AL TROTH

DUSANSMETANA.COM

In early October, anglers and bowhunters face a pleasant dilemma:

Should I cast for trout in the Big Hole River, or stalk a whitetail buck along its banks?

WILLIAM R. MONROE

MARK LAGERSTROM

Montana's winged creatures display many adaptations for survival. Above, a sphinx moth gathers nectar from a flower, while at left a northern flicker probes a tree cavity for insects.

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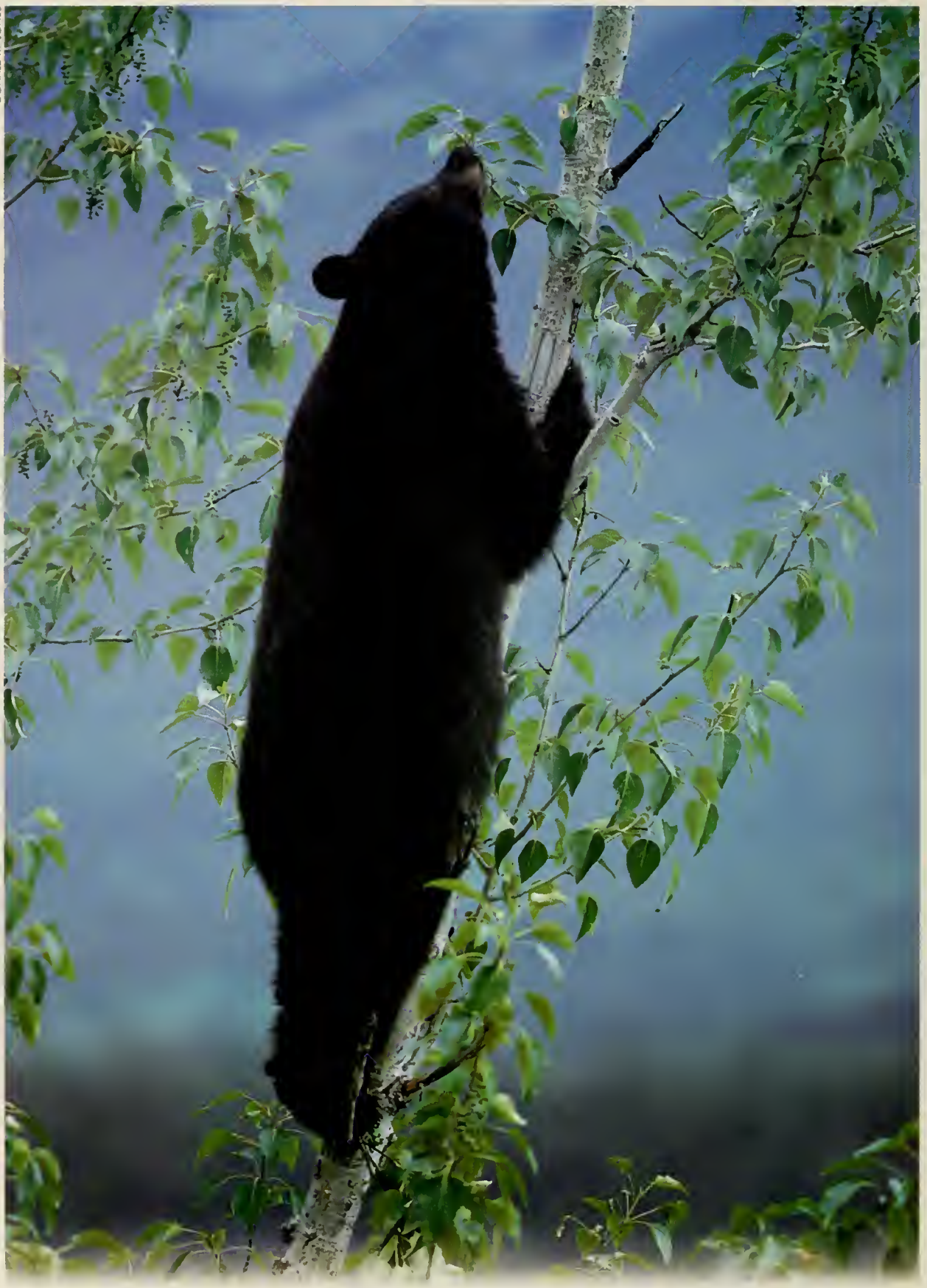

The spring menu for black bears features newly sprouted grasses, flowers, and green leaves.

DONALD M. JONES

Mountain goats spend much of the day perched on steep cliff faces where they are safe from predators. "Traction pads" on their hooves help them gain a foothold on narrow ledges.

RON SPOMER

The Wild and Scenic Missouri River downstream from Loma winds eastward through limestone cliffs and "mushroom" rock formations sculpted by erosion.

CHUCK HANEY

DEAN SAUSKOJUS

Eleven miles north of Ekalaka in Carter County, Medicine Rocks State Park welcomes picknickers, campers, and sightseers. According to legend, early Native Americans considered the rocks sacred and used the site for vision quests and other rituals.

MICHAEL JAVORKA

Golden cottonwoods and brown bluffs frame the Missouri River near Fort Benton.

RODNEY SCHLECHT

Pasque flowers are among the first wildflowers to awaken from their winter sleep.

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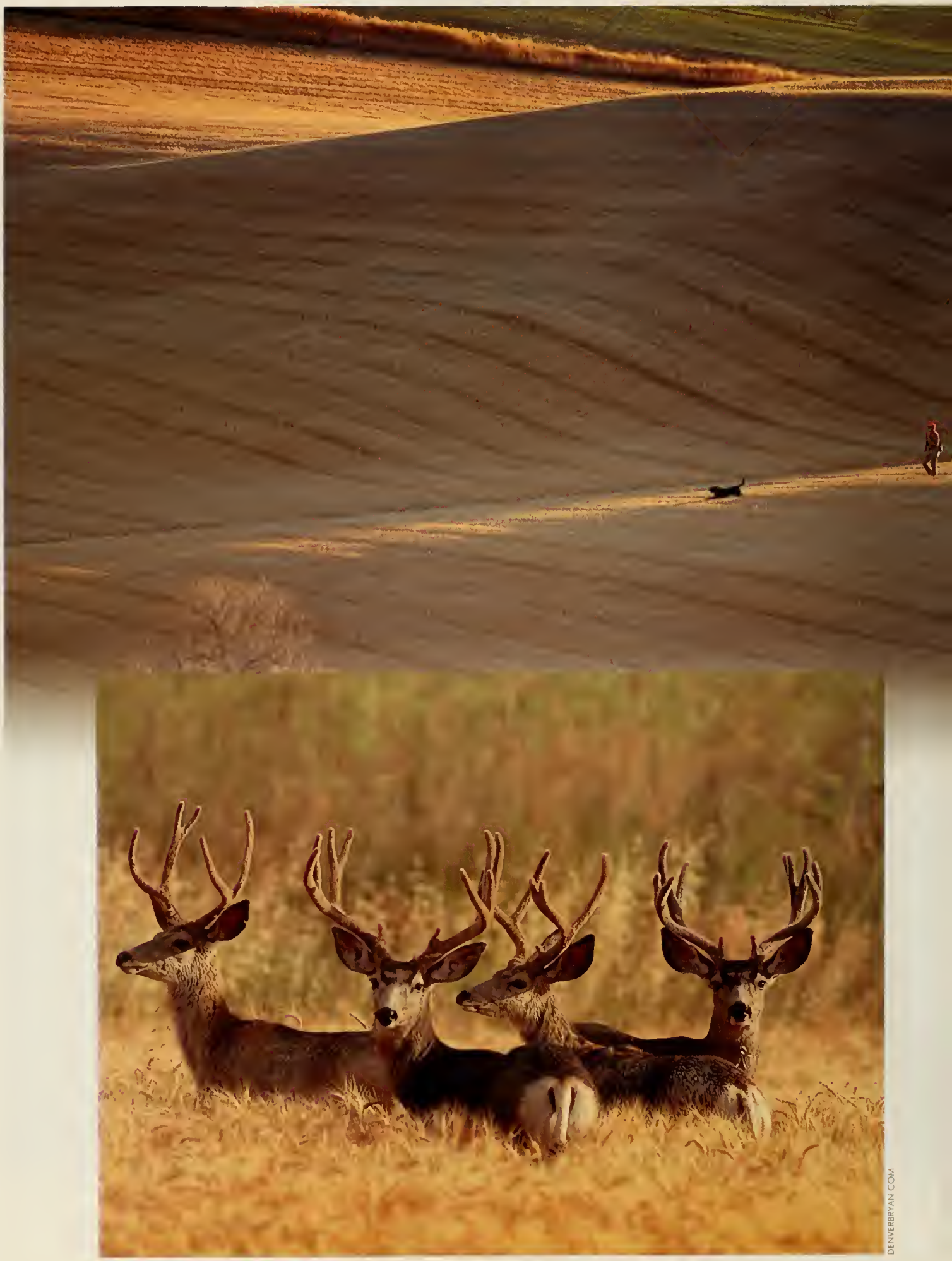
Elegant in breeding plumage, a drake pintail basks in early morning light.



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On the opposite page, a bird hunter follows his dog through rolling swells of harvested grain, while mule deer bucks pose in a field of uncut wheat. Above, a nervous pronghorn's raised rump hairs telegraph a warning to the rest of the herd.

Antlers adorned with grass and mud, a rutting bull elk challenges intruders.

These grizzly bear cubs will remain with their mother until they are two years old.

PETE & ALICE BENGEYFIELD

DONALD M. JONES

CAROL POLICH

CAROL POLICH

Beneath the mountains in Gallatin County,

an early snowstorm cloaks trees and shrubs in white.

A misty rainbow accents Palisade Falls in the

Gallatin National Forest south of Bozeman.

JOHN LAMBING

CONRAD ROWE ©

RODNEY SCHLECHT

Glacier National Park provides a home for pikas (above) and hoary marmots (left). On the opposite page, an alpine blizzard frosts the Garden Wall near Logan Pass.

At Holland Lake in the Swan Valley, an angler's lure makes a silver splash.

LARRY JAVORSKY

Known to many as a "marsh hawk," a northern harrier shelters her chick. These common raptors feed primarily on mice and voles.

DONALD M. JONES

A marsh wren gurgles a reedy melody, while a trio of red fox kits ham it up outside their den.

DONALD M. JONES

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RON BOGGS

Flies hover around a female bison and her calf at the National Bison Range near Moiese.

JOHN LAMBING

On the Custer National Forest near Ekalaka, chalk-colored cliffs and stately ponderosa pines rise above the plains.

Spray flies as a bull elk negotiates a shallow crossing.

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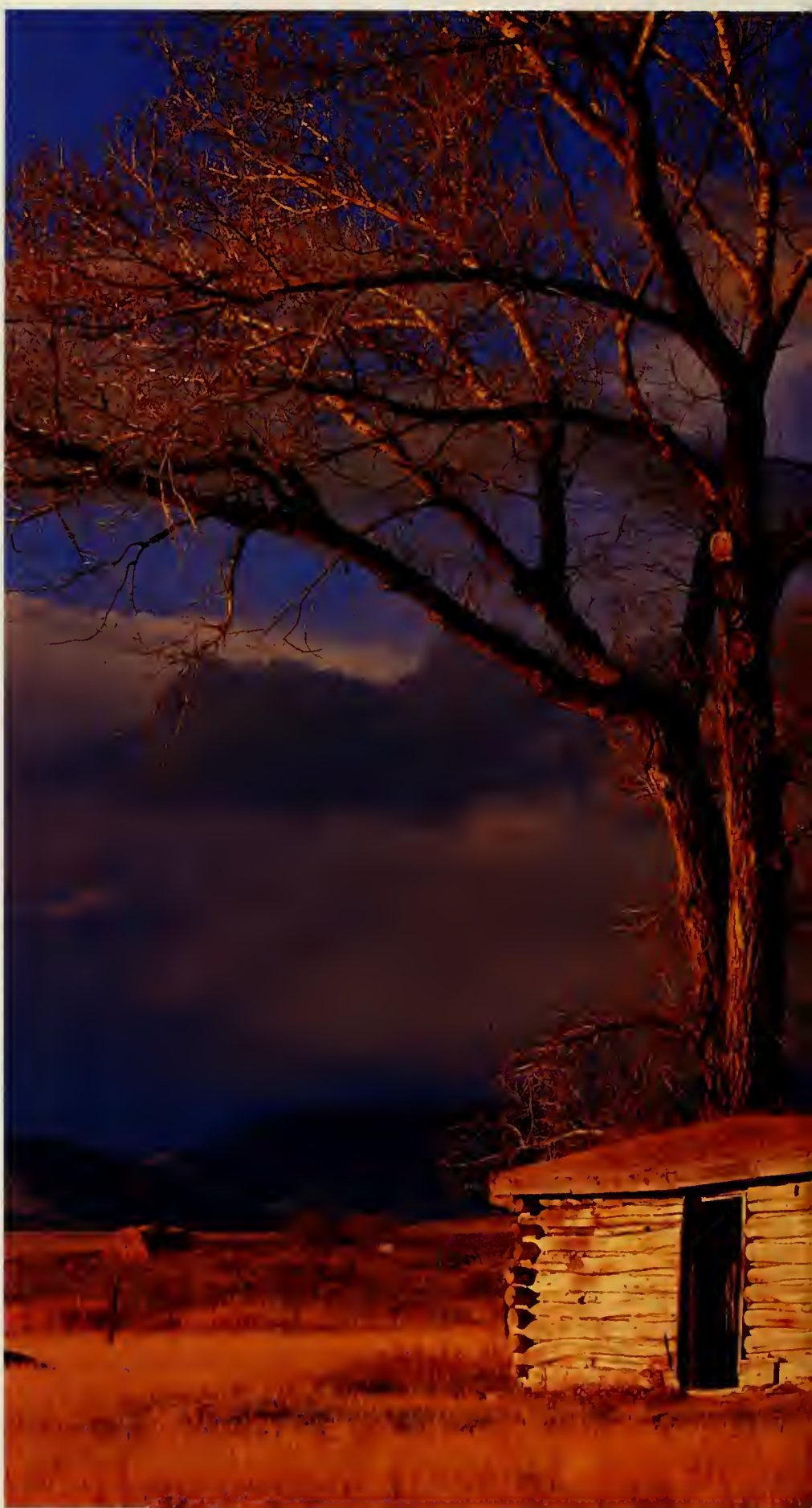
This mule deer's ears show plainly how the animal got its name.

RODNEY SCHLECHT



Fading sunlight illuminates a weathered cabin at Parker Homestead State Park near Three Forks.

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